

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A system comprising:

an encoder to provide a variable bit rate (VBR) representation of an image sequence, the VBR representation comprising a plurality of blocks of information; and
a processor to determine a plurality of time intervals T_p within the VBR representation in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is greater than a baseline value, to determine a plurality of time intervals T_n within the VBR representation in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is less than the baseline value, and to create a second representation of the image sequence in which some blocks of information B_p are removed from the time intervals T_p and interlaced with blocks of information B_n in the time intervals T_n to reduce a variation in a number of blocks of information per unit time between the time intervals T_p and T_n .

11. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the number of blocks of information per unit time in the second representation is about equal to the baseline value in the time intervals T_p and T_n .

12. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further to determine a bit rate for encoding the image sequence to the VBR representation which produces a desired information content of the second representation and constrains a maximum bit rate of the second representation to be less than or equal to a predetermined value.

13. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further to determine a bit rate for encoding the image sequence to the VBR representation which substantially maximizes a desired information content of the second representation and constrains a maximum bit rate of the second representation to be less than or equal to a predetermined value.

14. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is to populate a header in the second representation with data indicating the time intervals T_n .

15. (Original) The system of claim 10 further comprising a transmitter to stream the second representation of the image sequence via a communication network.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15 further comprising:

a receiver to receive the second representation of the image sequence via the communication network;

a buffer; and

a second processor responsive to the receiver to reconstruct frames of the image sequence concurrently with the second representation being received;

wherein during the time intervals T_n , the second processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on blocks of information B_n received about in real time, and to store the blocks of information B_p in the buffer, and

wherein during the time intervals T_p , the second processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on the blocks of information B_p stored in the buffer and blocks of information received about in real time.

17-19. (Cancelled)